

THE BLACKS

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Blacks comprise a very small minority of the population—on the order of 1 percent, perhaps less. This comes to less than 10,000 persons. It is hard to get a reading because Islanders when they identify themselves racially, tend to emphasize composite racial makeup—that is, they refer to themselves as Hawaiian-Caucasian-Filipino, Indian-Spanish-Negro, etc.

There were enough Blacks around in the early nineteenth century to occasion the coinage of a Hawaiian term—*haole 'ele'ele*, black foreigners. The first missionary company got a warm welcome from Anthony Allen, a Black farmer originally from Schenectady, N.Y., who had arrived in 1810. He had a Hawaiian wife and two children. The missionaries reported a sumptuous feast provided from his vegetable farm in the Pāwa'a district. In the missionary party of 1823, Betsey Stockton, "born in slavery," accompanied the Stewart Family. Miss Stockton had received an education while associated with the family of the president of Princeton College. She conducted a school for the children of commoners in Lahaina, but returned to the U.S. when Mrs. Stewart's health failed.

Among deserters from vessels engaged in whaling who swelled the foreign population were American Negroes and, notably, Blacks from the Cape Verde Islands, a Portuguese colony. Most of these arrived near mid-century and were widely known before the controlled immigration of white Portuguese laborers for plantation work began in 1878. The result was that the latter became known to Hawaiians as "the white Portuguese." The Blacks married Hawaiian women and their children disappeared into that racial body by the time of the annexation census.

After annexation, several federal officials posted to the Islands were Blacks, many of them to become firmly rooted here. The daughter of the collector of customs became a public school principal and served for many years on Kaua'i.

A number of the Puerto Ricans arriving as plantation labor in 1900 and subsequently were of mixed blood—white Spanish, black African, and a certain

amount of American Indian. Probably a large percentage could have been counted as Black, but they were listed as a separate national group in 1910 and subsequent censuses up to 1950, sometimes as a sub-category of Caucasians. In 1960, 1970, and 1980 they were merged with other racial categories, chiefly Caucasian.

The majority of the Black population is in the military—and many residents tend to identify all Blacks that way. When the military segregated its Blacks before and after World War II, there was a tendency in Hawai'i to follow suit. It is safe to say that the majority of Black residents were formerly connected with the service, enjoyed Hawai'i, and chose to settle here. Many married local women and became identified with the Islands. But the fact that most Blacks here are males, 214.4 to 100 females in 1970, and in the military, creates its own difficulties.

Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, founded by Black servicemen in 1968, has a predominantly Black congregation. Although Pentecostal and other denominations also serve Blacks, Trinity Baptist has the largest congregation and is a member of the Hawaii Council of Churches.

Hawai'i has a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People—which has as many white members as it has Blacks but apparently does not appeal to the other non-white minorities, who seem to reject the word *Colored* when applied to them. Groups which feel that they belong to Hawai'i tend, with some recent exceptions particularly among Hawaiians, to feel no need for activist organizations, hoping that problems can be solved by other methods, a fact that seems to underscore Hawai'i's overall multi-racial harmony.

But the fact that there is no particular Black community could be an important reason many Blacks do not wish to make Hawai'i their home. Many Black women cite it as reason for their discontent. And, of course, the high cost of living is an important element, and no particular industry invites Blacks.

Black residents agree the Islands are ahead of Mainland states in the areas of discrimination and race and human relations. They also agree that while the situation is not perfect, it is a great deal better. Two other points need to be emphasized about the Black in Hawai'i. His attitude depends heavily on who he is

and what he does; his philosophy is shaped to an exceptional degree by his personal adjustment or maladjustment, his success or failure, his happiness or unhappiness. He is as yet less likely than most to define his problems. Knowingly or not, he is ambivalent; things are not as good as he would like them to be, but they are good enough to make him tolerate the bad without much articulation.

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